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AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR OVERSEAS AID

(INCORPORATED IN THE ACT)

ACFOA HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICE
124 Napier St. Fitzroy, 3065
Australia. Tel: (03) 417-7505

Memo: re reports of ill-treatment and extra-judicial execution at Lalerek Mutin in the Viqueque district of East Timor
To: Carl Murphy, Indonesia Desk, DFAT
Fax: 06-261 3262
Date: 27 June 1990

The details of these cases were compiled with considerable care by an East Timorese Catholic priest and were recently forwarded by him to ACFOA. The following is a summary of the principal allegations in the original Portuguese report a copy of which is available on request.

1. Following the rebellion at Kraras in August (?) 1983 by Timorese ABRI conscripts and subsequent massacre, many willagers either fled to the mountains or were resettled in Lalerek Mutin, Viqueque district, in September 1983.

   Illness and hunger forced those who fled to the mountains to surrender to ABRI in Bukarin and Viqueque. Many were then killed and buried in the river We-Tuku and at Sukaer-Oan, 10 km southeast of Viqueque. Survivors were settled at Lalerek Mutin but harsh conditions there resulted in deaths from starvation, yellow fever and malaria.

   As of October 21, 1989, the population of Lalerek Mutin numbered 1553 including 191 widows and 30 widowers.

2. Teresa Amaral, 27, and CristinaBrandao, 26, both formerly from Bibileu, now live in Lalerek Mutin at RK-II/RT-II. Their husbands, Olacaio and Delfim Rangel joined the Fretilin guerillas following the Kraras rebellion. The two women suffer constant surveillance and harassment, including rape, by 8 Indonesian commandos from the 2nd battalion of the 86th unit whose HQ is in Baucau.

3. On 26 March, 1990, the 8 commandos who were at the women's home, claimed to have seen their husbands nearby and to have pursued them to Joaquim Sarmento's home. No one was found, but Sarmento, 42, was taken to the platoon post of battalion 408 where he was badly beaten and subsequently made a false declaration admitting contact with the resistance.

4. Antero Carvalho, 50, a widower who was displaced to Lalerek Mutin on 27 September 1983 was accused of contact with resistance guerillas at We-Todo, interrogated, tortured and detained. He was detained at the military post 27-29 March 1990 and made a false confession.

5. Sebastiao dos Reis was severely tortured by the Indonesian military, also in March 1990 it seems. Under torture he declared that he and 12 other villagers, (names given), supplied Fretilin guerillas with ammunition and food etc, through Candido Amaral.

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6. Candido Amaral, 39, originally from Bibileu now of Lalerek Mutin, married with five children, was detained at about 23.00 hours on 28 March 1990, interrogated by Indonesian soldiers and tortured. His torturer was a Timorese Paulo Miguel. On 29 March, at 5.00am, he was killed by machinegun at Tua-Metan.

7. Indonesian response: on 20 March (should probably read 30/3), an Indonesian commando officer from Viqueque visited Lalerek Mutin where, following Candido Amaral's burial, he gave a bag of rice to his widow, Luzia Amaral, and her children. In a report to the bupati the officer stated that torture had been used because those in question had contacted Fretilin and that Candido Amaral was shot as he attempted to collect a gun from his house.

   On 30 March, Lt. Col. Yosep Hendro Soemarsono, the Viqueque district head, accompanied 31 people to Lalerek Mutin after they had taken refuge at the Kodim base on 29/3.

   On 31 March, Major Jecky, the Indonesian Commander of the 86th unit in Baucau, informed Governor Carrascalao in Dili that soldiers responsible for the torture and execution would be punished. He also promised to provide Candido's Amaral's family with Rp200,000, rice and clothes.

8. ICRC response

   On 1 April 1990, an International Red Cross representative visited Viqueque hospital to enquire into the situation by interviewing patients.

Request

It would appear that Lalerek Mutin has been a centre of conflict and human rights abuses for a considerable time. It is therefore requested that the situation there be the focus of a special,comprehensive and on-going inquiry by the Australian Government. Since the names of some individuals and military units involved in the abuses are mentioned and the Indonesian commander has reportedly undertaken to punish those responsible, it is also requested that this aspect of the situation be investigated and reported on. Even the subordination of Indonesian troops to Indonesian civil law would contribute, albeit partially, to the human rights situation in East Timor.

Pat Walsh